

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A plunge mechanism includes an elongated, hollow probe that vacuum grips at its free end, and carries, without relative movement therebetween, an electronic device under test (DUT) to a test site on a board, or socket, of a test circuit. A reciprocating drive 5 plunges the DUT in a first direction to a test site where the leads of the DUT each align with and connect electrically to an associated electrical contact. The drive uses a high-precision linear slide to maintain the alignment of the probe with the test site during the plunging movement. The probe materials and dimensions provide sufficient stiffness to resist a shift of the IC out of alignment due to the weight of the gripped DUT, vibrations, 10 or contact forces between the DUT and the board or socket. The diameter of the probe is preferably smaller than the x-y dimensions of the DUT. No DUT alignment members are used on the test board or socket that limit the physical proximity of the DUT to its preferred test position with respect to the test circuit.